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MESSAGE FROM MR ONG TENG CHEONG  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE  
TO THE 14TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE  
ASEAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANIZATION, KUALA LUMPUR  
DELIVERED BY MR TAN SOO KHOON  
LEADER OF THE SINGAPORE DELEGATION  
ON 20 SEPTEMBER 1993 AT 11.05 AM

I extend my warmest greetings and best wishes to the distinguished delegates to the 14th General Assembly of the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Organization.

2 ASEAN has come a long way since the turbulent period of the 1960s in our region. After more than a quarter century of ASEAN cooperation, our countries are at peace with one another and with other countries. For the past decade, the ASEAN members have been among the world's fastest growing economies. These achievements have been made possible through an active network of regional and intra-regional cooperation to strengthen good relations both among the ASEAN countries and with all the major countries outside the region.

3 In the 1990s, ASEAN must broaden and deepen its cooperation to deal with the political and economic uncertainties arising from the end of the Cold War and the global trend towards economic regionalism. Our task is to identify, meet and overcome the new challenges of this greatly transformed world. ASEAN has shown vision and maturity in its response to the international changes through the important decisions taken at the Fourth ASEAN Summit held in Singapore in January 1992.

4 I commend the ASEAN governments for making the Summit decision to establish an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) its immediate task. We need AFTA to remain competitive and to sustain the dynamism of our economies into the next century. I also commend the ASEAN governments for acting swiftly to implement another Summit decision by initiating political and security dialogues with ASEAN's dialogue partners and deciding to include other countries, particularly China, Russia and

Vietnam, in the security discussions. These security dialogues will enhance understanding and cooperation to help promote regional peace and security.

5 I believe that AIPO with its members in the legislatures in ASEAN are well placed to contribute to the success of these new ASEAN initiatives. I am confident that AIPO members are prepared to work together with one another and with the ASEAN governments to build a better future for the peoples of the whole region. The future prospects of ASEAN are bright because we are all keenly aware of the need to work hard for closer cooperation.

6 I wish the 14th AIPO General Assembly every success in its deliberations.

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